



January 27, 2026

Dear Chairman Shanley and Members, House Committee on Elections

SACRI supports H7236 introduced by Representative Morales to create a two-year pilot program for Equity Impact Statements on proposed legislation and the governor's budget. By integrating these statements into the legislative process, Rhode Island will take an important step toward ensuring that public policy advances fairness and opportunity for all residents.

Just as fiscal notes help lawmakers understand the financial implications of their decisions; Equity Impact Statements provide a vital lens on how proposed laws may affect different communities—helping to prevent unintended harms and promote more inclusive outcomes.

Designating the Commission on Health Advocacy & Equity (CHAE) to develop these analyses builds on existing expertise and ensures a thoughtful, data-informed approach. The program's balanced structure—allowing up to 20 requests per session from legislative leaders and the Rhode Island Black, Latino, Indigenous, Asian American and Pacific Islander (RIBLIA) Caucus—will allow for meaningful pilot testing and refinement.

As advocates for older Rhode Islanders and older adults with disabilities we also urge that age equity be recognized as a central value within this framework. Ageism, like racism, sexism, and other forms of bias, shapes access to opportunity and well-being. Examining how laws and budgets affect older adults, especially those facing intersectional inequities, strengthens the overall impact of this initiative and moves our state closer to true equity for every generation.

Thank you for your consideration of SACRI's support for H7236.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Anne Costa, Executive Director
Senior Agenda Coalition of RI (SACRI)